



Comhairle na nDochtúirí Leighis
Medical Council

Medical Council Business Plan 2018

Approved by the Medical Council for
submission to the Minister for Health

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Introduction

The Medical Council's Business Plan arising from the Statement of Strategy 2014 - 2018 is produced in accordance with Part 3, Section 15 of the Medical Practitioners Act 2007. The Plan is also consistent with sections 1.15 and 1.17 of the "Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, 2016" and also the Medical Council's Terms of Reference. This Business Plan sets out in detail the objectives and associated expenditure plans of the Medical Council for the final year its Statement of Strategy (2014 – 2018).

This comprehensive plan has been developed by the Medical Council Executive in collaboration with Council, its Committees and Working Groups and was approved by the Medical Council on 14th December 2017. The implementation of this document will be monitored by Council and the Executive via quarterly reporting on business plan objectives and strategic metrics to ensure that targets are met. The Medical Council will publish its Annual Report for 2017 as part of its statutory reporting requirement and this will comprehensively outline the activities of the organisation which were undertaken for that period.

The Medical Council's Statement of Strategy for 2014 - 2018 presents the vision for the organisation: "Providing leadership to doctors in enhancing good professional practice in the interests of patient safety." An appropriate balance in Council's focus and activities must be maintained so as to ensure there are appropriate emphases on both the public and the practitioners. The Council continues to maximise the use of resources, providing the best value for money whilst working collaboratively with the relevant statutory bodies to ensure the most efficient and effective working relationships are maintained. In developing this Plan, the status of the 5 year statement of strategy and the objectives therein and the context of the current economic environment and its challenges have been taken into account.

Purpose and Functions of the Medical Council

The Business Plan stems from the Statement of Strategy 2014 - 2018 and takes into account the Council's vision, mission and values.

Vision

Providing *leadership* to doctors in enhancing *good professional practice* in the interests of *patient safety*

Mission

Ensuring *high standards of education, training, and practice* among doctors for the *benefit of patients*

Values

1. We strive to further enhance trust between patients, doctors and the Medical Council
2. We lead by example, setting high standards for ourselves and for the doctors and organisations we regulate
3. We act in a respectful, fair, empathetic and consistent manner
4. We make independent, informed and objective decisions and we are accountable for them
5. We encourage diversity, engagement and learning to help us be a better organisation

Strategic Objectives

The Medical Council Strategic Objectives are set out in detail in the Statement of Strategy 2014 – 2018. These set the operational direction and functions for the organisation over the period.

Strategic objectives:

1. Develop an effective and efficient register that is responsive to the changing needs of the public and the medical profession.
2. Create a supportive learning environment to enable good professional practice.
3. Maintain the confidence of the public and the profession in the Council's processes by developing a proportionate and targeted approach to regulatory activities.
4. Enhance patient safety through insightful research and greater engagement.
5. Build an organisational culture that supports leadership and learning.
6. Develop a sustainable and high-performing organisation.

Measuring Performance against Strategic Objectives

The Council's Statement of Strategy outlines how effectiveness of implementation will be measured. The Medical Council has a set of agreed metrics in place to oversee implementation of each of the six strategic objectives. Further metrics are in place at executive level to measure performance at operational level. Use of these metrics provides both the Medical Council and its external stakeholders with a clear and straightforward mechanism for measuring the organisation's performance in the areas which are of greatest strategic importance.

Operational Context and Challenges for 2018

This plan has been framed within a challenging fiscal and human resources environment. In developing this Business Plan the Medical Council has, where possible, identified the impact that operating challenges and risks could have on its delivery.

These include:

Council term completion and handover: 2018 Marks the final year of the current Council's 5 year term on the 31st May. The process to form the incoming Council is underway with changes to the approach to allow for a staggered term which will bring the Council in line with best practice and the other health regulators. (Details of which will be communicated separately)

2018 will see a significant if not complete loss of existing Council members and with that their knowledge and expertise of the Medical Councils culture, processes and decision making.

As such an extensive handover is required as well as comprehensive training for Council members and statutory Committee members in particular. We have learnt in the past that this generally leads to a period of suspension of some core activities due to the steep learning curve associated with its membership and discharge of duties. The executive will work to make this transition as smooth and efficient as possible for all involved.

Headquarter requirements: With significant activity and the increased work force sanctioned in 2017 the Council has outgrown its current headquarters. The Council has conducted a review and is working to obtain additional space and reconfigure in part some areas of the current headquarters (currently in year 6 of a 20 year lease). There are also plans to source and propose a long term solution over the coming months. The Medical Council executive will engage with the Department of Health and the Minister on this as progression is made.

Staff retention: The Medical Council has had difficulty not only in obtaining adequately qualified personnel but in retaining personnel in recent years. Turnover reached a peak in the first half of 2017 but levelled off to a more "normal" level in the latter half of 2017. The Council recognise the need for highly specialised and qualified individuals to carry out its work. We also recognise the need to proactively work to retain and plan for the succession of our staff and this is a key focus area for 2018 to maintain the corporate knowledge and momentum of the organisation.

Legislation: The Council has been engaging with the Department and the Minister over the past 5 years on amendments to the Medical Practitioners Act, 2007. A suite of amendments are required to best serve the public interest by both strengthening the Council's regulatory remit and streamlining processes. The Council looks forward to progressing these legislative amendments in 2018. The Medical Practitioners (Amendment) Bill, 2014 will have particular impact in expanding the Council's role and remit in 2018 retention process as the requirement for indemnity for medical practitioners becomes part of the annual retention process.

Strategic Direction: The Medical Council is due to begin a period of consultation with the incoming Council, profession and stakeholders on its strategic direction for the coming 5 years. This will consider the 2014 – 2018 Strategy outputs, its accomplishments as well as areas arising for focus and consideration in the coming years.

Significant Activities of Note

- Develop and publish content to support induction needs of doctors, as identified in the Safe Start Educational needs assessment
- Changes to registration and complaints handling processes arising from legislative amendments arising from the Health (Miscellaneous Provisions) bill, the Medical Practitioners (Amendment Bill 2014), and European Union (Recognition of Professional Qualifications) Regulations.
- Implement plan for development and training of assessor pool for intern, undergraduate and postgraduate quality assurance activities.
- Continue to develop and deliver new cycle of regional accreditation of undergraduate medical education, intern and postgraduate training sites.
- Develop a plan and commence implementation to complete accreditation of a backlog of postgraduate specialist training programmes awaiting approval.
- Review suite of education and training standards and criteria, to ensure an appropriately integrated approach is taken to regulation across the continuum of professional development; and ensure the standards are sufficiently outcomes-oriented.
- Survey trainers to gain understanding of needs of medical trainers in postgraduate settings.
- Undertake to review the programme of performance assessment in response to concerns about doctors' practice and implement any ensuing process changes
- Coordinate and implement an engagement plan to help inform the strategic direction of the organisation from 2018 onwards
- Conduct a feasibility study regarding an internal inquiry unit.
- Implement a staggering of the incoming Council term to enable retention of corporate knowledge and experience at board level.
- Provide for an efficient and effective handover and induction of Council.
- Ensure compliance with new or evolving legislation such as the General Data Protection Regulation.
- Consultation and preparation of the Council's next Statement of Strategy 2019 – 2023.
- Progress with the Council's short and long term Property strategy to ensure a fit for purpose Headquarters.
- To fulfil the Medical Council's commitment to breakeven and aim for a moderate surplus to ensure prudent stewardship and long term sustainability of the Council and its statutory.

Detail of Planned 2018 Activities

1.1 Ensuring safe pathways onto and within the register	Assess and make available content to support induction needs of doctors, as identified in the Safe Start Educational needs assessment
1.1 Ensuring safe pathways onto and within the register	Finalise MOU to support the delivery of the PRES L3, including: - agreement with hosts - review of fee model
1.2 Pursuing operational excellence in registration process	Develop internal quality management system
1.2 Pursuing operational excellence in registration process	Deliver system improvements to NICS, as identified through NICS/MyAccount ICT Requirements specification, includes changes across: - annual retention - Professional Indemnity
1.3 Ensuring registration processes respond to legislative change	Professional Indemnity - Medical Practitioners (Amendment Act 2017) - Draft scheme, criteria & rules following introduction of legislation - design and implementation of process/procedures for monitoring compliance
1.3 Ensuring registration processes respond to legislative change	National Vetting Bureau (Children & Vulnerable persons) Acts 2012 and 2016 - Respond appropriately, as required, - Take any necessary steps to implement provision of the Act including any necessary changes to Registration process.
1.4 Ensuring continuing registration reflects continuing fitness to practise	Continue programme to monitor doctors' maintenance of professional competence, taking action where necessary.
2.1 Defining and communicating what it means to be a good doctor	Finalise and publish review of guidance on doctors' relationship with industry.

2.1 Defining and communicating what it means to be a good doctor	Complete and publish supporting materials for Ethical Guide.
2.1 Defining and communicating what it means to be a good doctor	Research the use of an Android and iOS App for doctors to access practical tools and information such as the Ethical Guide for implementation in 2018
2.2 Shaping High quality learning environments for doctors	Continue to develop and deliver new cycle of regional accreditation of undergraduate medical education, intern and postgraduate training sites.
2.2 Shaping High quality learning environments for doctors	Implement plan for development and training of assessor pool for undergraduate, intern and postgraduate quality assurance activities.
2.2 Shaping High quality learning environments for doctors	Develop a plan and commence implementation to complete accreditation of a backlog of postgraduate specialist training programmes awaiting approval.
2.2 Shaping High quality learning environments for doctors	Continue implementation of action plan arising from Your Training Counts
2.2 Shaping High quality learning environments for doctors	Develop research strategy to further evaluate compliance with Medical Council standards for medical education and training.
2.2 Shaping High quality learning environments for doctors	Re-determination by USA National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation that Medical Council of Ireland's undergraduate accreditation processes meet USA standards.
2.2 Shaping High quality learning environments for doctors	Review suite of education and training standards and criteria, to ensure an appropriately integrated approach is taken to regulation across the continuum of professional development; and ensure the standards are sufficiently outcomes-oriented.

2.2 Shaping High quality learning environments for doctors	Develop and implement an action plan to revise anatomy functions on foot of the enactment of the (pending) Human Tissue Bill
2.2 Shaping High quality learning environments for doctors	Conduct a desk-based thematic review of outcomes-based learning and assessment.
2.2 Shaping High quality learning environments for doctors	Develop a position paper on a common registration examination
2.2 Shaping High quality learning environments for doctors	Convene a Focus Group (inclusive consultation event) with all postgraduate training bodies with a view to mapping and understanding existing methods of recognising and developing trainers in postgraduate MET.
2.2 Shaping High quality learning environments for doctors	Lead the evolvement of the maintenance of professional competence model and monitor the Professional Competence Schemes operated by the PGTBs under Arrangement the MCI
2.3 Enhancing lifelong learning and specialisation opportunities for doctors	Recognition of new medical specialties: - Implement project plan to enhance process following 2017 external review; - Conduct consultation process with targeted stakeholders; - Re-open process.
2.4 Fostering good health among doctors	Implementation of additional supports to Medical Practitioner health initiatives.
3.0 Maintain public confidence in the Council's processes by developing a proportionate and targeted approach to regulatory activities	Implementation of the Project Plan for election and nominations process for new term of Council 2018 - 2023
3.0 Maintain public confidence in the Council's processes by developin a proportionat and targeted approach to regulatory activities	Aid the incoming Council in assessing its board and committee structure

3.1 Influencing enhanced procedures to progress complaints throughout the health system	Conduct a review of membership to ensure the system is managed optimally within the parameters of the legislation.
3.1 Influencing enhanced procedures to progress complaints throughout the health system	Conduct a review of procedures to ensure the system is managed optimally within the parameters of the legislation.
3.1 Influencing enhanced procedures to progress complaints throughout the health system	Host information sessions and briefings to focus on clarifying our role and responsibilities to patients and independent hospitals.
3.2 Safeguarding integrity of register	Operate the performance assessment programme & implement programme enhancements and process efficiencies as required.
3.3 Learning from experience	Updating Information Booklets to all parties to a complaint, based on informed learnings from past research conducted, to include multi lingual versions of literature.
3.3 Learning from experience	Analyse and reflect FTP findings and Council imposed sanctions, to produce an updated Sanctions Guidance document, for the assistance and information of Practitioners, Council members, Employers, Indemnifiers and High Court.
3.3 Learning from experience	Analyse and reflect FTP findings and Council imposed sanctions and trends, to offer guidance to practitioners, via the website.
3.3 Learning from experience	Continue to collect annual data on the complaints process and those involved and publish the 2013 - 2017 results
4.1 Conducting research to inform our work	Tender for a multi-year process to seek the general public's view about the profession and the medical council
4.1 Conducting research to inform our work	Support in-house research projects & programmes
4.1 Conducting research to inform our work	Lead on core research initiatives inhouse and externally

4.2 Shaping and responding to emerging legislation and policy	Implementation of changes arising from the 2017 Corporate Governance Review in line with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies including a skills requirement analysis of the Council as a board
4.2 Shaping and responding to emerging legislation and policy	Ensure compliance with FOI and GDPR legislative requirements via comprehensive process and data review, policy updates and training.
4.2 Shaping and responding to emerging legislation and policy	Research and develop implementation plan for emerging legislative requirements including PEPPOL
4.3 Building and strengthening strategic relationships	Creation and implementation of a public representative engagement strategy to inform and update members of the Oireachtas and other public representatives about our role and ongoing projects
4.3 Building and strengthening strategic relationships	Review external stakeholder newsletter structure and procedures
4.3 Building and strengthening strategic relationships	Creation of a communication and stakeholder engagement strategy to accompany the Corporate Strategy 2019-2023
4.3 Building and strengthening strategic relationships	Develop a regional media awareness campaign
4.3 Building and strengthening strategic relationships	Profile the incoming President and Council with general public and key stakeholders through proactive media engagement
4.4 Effective communication	Development of a cross organisation style and house guide for all publications, reports, presentations, online communications and correspondence
4.4 Effective communication	Conduct a full website audit of all content
4.4 Effective communication	Review of website content and make improvements to page structures, inline with business item 4.4.1

4.4 Effective communication	Tender for new website support service provider and implementation of new CMS
4.4 Effective communication	Improve digital communications outputs through a series of short online professional videos about our remit
4.4 Effective communication	Develop in-house capabilities to film, produce and edit short videos for use on digital platforms
4.4 Effective communication	Support newly elected President, Vice-President and Council members with communications advice, support and training if and as required
4.4 Effective communication	Carry out GDPR & FOI Training Sessions for Council, Committees, Working Groups & Staff
4.4 Effective communication	Further communication plan regarding Information Governance such as quarterly updates of the Council's publication scheme on the website, maintaining an agenda item at Council meetings for Data Protection and Freedom of Information updates etc.
5.1 Implementing good practice governance and human resources	Review Policies/ Handbook/Contracts of Employment
5.1 Implementing good practice governance and human resources	Review and update Induction Process
5.1 Implementing good practice governance and human resources	Develop a comprehensive Induction and L&D plan for incoming Council and Committees to achieve policy development and understanding of the Council's statutory obligation
5.2 Balancing capacity and capability	Devise new streamlined PMDS process
5.2 Balancing capacity and capability	Strategic approach to Performance management / Training /Reward and Recognition
5.2 Balancing capacity and capability	Talent Management and Sucession planning

5.2 Balancing capacity and capability	Preparation of an Organisational HR requirement document: Capacity/ Job evaluation/ Grade realignment based on 2019 - 23 strategy
5.2 Balancing capacity and capability	SEO /Management development / Leadership programme
5.3 Aligning culture and strategy	Run Dignity and Respect at work workshops and integrate this into Medical Council culture
5.3 Aligning culture and strategy	Set up staff engagement committee
5.4 Effective Internal Communication	Review structures and content of internal staff newsletter in consultation with the staff internal communications group
5.4 Effective Internal Communication	Implementation of a new Intranet Portal for internal communications, information sharing, and general engagement
5.4 Effective Internal Communication	Support and provide technical induction for the incoming council and its committees
6.1 Delivering value for money	Proactive management of significant suppliers and relevant contracts to ensure maximum delivery, efficiency and value for money achieved
6.1 Delivering value for money	Review of Print Managed Services Contract
6.1 Delivering value for money	Prepare and manage 5 year rent review
6.2 Developing and maintaining a sustainable business model	Ensure organisational resources remain under review to ensure maximum alignment to strategic commitments and areas of high risk
6.2 Developing and maintaining a sustainable business model	Property Strategy: Short term measures to increase office space are implemented and Long term options are progressed by the Property Strategy Review Group
6.2 Developing and maintaining a sustainable business model	Undertake a financial review arising from Property strategy progression

6.2 Developing and maintaining a sustainable business model	Developing a Corporate Social Responsibility Framework and policy across all key areas (including environmental awareness, procurement practices, energy consumption and e-communication) in line with Energy, Procurement and Environmental legislations.
6.2 Developing and maintaining a sustainable business model	Provide training to enable super users within the ICT function to provide level 1 and 2 support on site
6.2 Developing and maintaining a sustainable business model	Update the disaster recovery and business continuity management plans
6.2 Developing and maintaining a sustainable business model	Webhosting and Disaster Recovery Site Review and Contract Renewal
6.2 Developing and maintaining a sustainable business model	Implementation of the Technology refresh policy to ensure fit for purpose IT infrastructure
6.2 Developing and maintaining a sustainable business model	Implement the broadband upgrade plan with HEAnet
6.2 Developing and maintaining a sustainable business model	Research file share options available to facilitate the Council and its Committees to access relevant high volume, sensitive documentation
6.2 Developing and maintaining a sustainable business model	Carry out threat and vulnerability assessments of ICT Systems and appoint a IT security partner
6.2 Developing and maintaining a sustainable business model	To conduct a feasibility study to inform the next work force plan regarding an internal inquiry unit.
6.2 Developing and maintaining a sustainable business model	Implement endpoint security to address zero day attacks
6.2 Developing and maintaining a sustainable business model	Conduct an organisation-wide ergonomic review and implement actions arising

6.2 Developing and maintaining a sustainable business model	Review any potential impact pertaining to Brexit and macro economic events on registration levels
6.3 Focusing on organisational capability with an emphasis on business process improvement	Continue programme of business process improvement in education and training function including ongoing implementation of recommendations from recent external review.
6.3 Focusing on organisational capability with an emphasis on business process improvement	Complete Phase 1 of ETP Database Project
6.3 Focusing on organisational capability with an emphasis on business process improvement	Design and scoping of Phase 2 and 3 functionality for ETP Database Project.
6.3 Focusing on organisational capability with an emphasis on business process improvement	Complete Record Management and retention project (Q1 2018)
6.3 Focusing on organisational capability with an emphasis on business process improvement	Conduct a review and update of all Corporate Services policies
6.3 Focusing on organisational capability with an emphasis on business process improvement	Implementation of an updated phone system
6.3 Focusing on organisational capability with an emphasis on business process improvement	Implementation and transfer to new Document Management System- Share Point
6.3 Focusing on organisational capability with an emphasis on business process improvement	Revise and update the remote access approach with a view to a more controlled and accessible solution

6.3 Focusing on organisational capability with an emphasis on business process improvement	Implement a secure file transfer solution between the organisation and key third parties
6.3 Focusing on organisational capability with an emphasis on business process improvement	Automation of daily payment reconciliation